

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1455

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 7640

EXDIS

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY ROGERS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SHUM, CI

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE GOC DECLARATION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

REF: STATE 274585; SANTIAGO 7578

1. I CALLED ON FORMIN CARVAJAL MORNING DEC 17 TO INFORM HIM OF YOUR PRESS BRIEFING ON THE ARMS LIMITATION INITIATIVE IN THE DECLARATION OF AYACUCHO (SEPTTEL).

2. AT CONCLUSION OF DISCUSSION, CARVAJAL AND HIS ECONOMIC ADVISER RICARDO CLARO, WHO WAS PRESENT, SAID THEY WOULD LIKE TO ASK ME SOME QUESTIONS WITH REGARD TO PENDING FOREIGN AID LEGISLATION. THEY FIRST ASKED FOR A STATUS REPORT, WHICH I GAVE THEM, POINTING OUT THAT WE DID NOT YET KNOW WHAT THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT WOULD SAY WITH RESPECT TO CHILE AND THAT WE COULD NOT ESTIMATE THE PROSPECTS FOR PASSAGE OF THE BILL NOW UNDER CONSIDERATION.

3. CARVAJAL THEN SAID THAT PRESIDENT PINOCHET WAS GIVING CONSIDERATION TO THE ISSUANCE OF A STATEMENT, NEAR THE END OF THE YEAR, IN WHICH A SUBSTANTIAL ADJUSTMENT IN THE GOC'S DETAINEE POLICY WOULD BE MADE IN THE INTEREST OF IMPROVING CHILE'S IMAGE ABROAD. CARVAJAL WONDERED WHETHER ISSUING SUCH A STATEMENT

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IN THE NEXT DAY OR TWO INSTEAD MIGHT NOT ASSIST IN

PRODUCING THE BEST POSSIBLE LANGUAGE WITH REGARD TO ASSISTANCE TO CHILE IN THE NEW LEGISLATION.

4. I ASKED HIM WHAT THE CONTENT OF THE STATEMENT WOULD BE. CARVAJAL SAID HE RECOGNIZED THAT THE TIME-CONSUMING OBSTACLES GOC HAD ENCOUNTERED IN TRYING TO RESETTLE ABROAD THE FIRST 100 DETAINEES TO BE RELEASED BY THE GOC HAD HAD AN UNFORTUNATE IMPACT, AND HAD LEFT CHILE OPEN TO THE REPROACH THAT IT WAS NOT FULFILLING THE PUBLIC COMMITMENTS IT HAD MADE IN REGARD TO DETAINEE RELEASE. HE ASSUMED THAT PINOCHET'S STATEMENT WOULD ABANDON THE CURRENT POLICY OF MOVING 100 DETAINEES AT A TIME, WHICH AT THE PRESENT RATE OF RESETTLEMENT WOULD MEAN SPREADING THE PROCESS OVER MANY MONTHS. INSTEAD, PINOCHET WOULD EXPRESS WILLINGNESS TO RELEASE ALL OF THE HUNDREDS OF DETAINEES THE GOC HAD IN MIND, AND ENCOURAGE QUICKEST POSSIBLE RESETTLEMENT IN OTHER COUNTRIES.

5. I ASKED WHETHER ANY OTHER MATTERS WOULD BE COVERED IN SUCH A STATEMENT. AFTER SOME CONSULTATION WITH CLARO, CARVAJAL REPLIED VAGUELY THAT IT COULD COVER VARIOUS OTHER ASPECTS OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS PROBLEM.

6. I SAID I THOUGHT THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS HAD GONE SO FAR, AND THE TIME BEFORE ADJOURNMENT OF CONGRESS WAS SO SHORT, THAT I WAS PERSONALLY DUBIOUS OF THE RESULTS OF A STATEMENT OF THIS CHARACTER ISSUED A DAY OR TWO FROM NOW. I ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT THE BEST JUDGMENT WOULD OBVIOUSLY BE MADE BY SOME ONE MUCH CLOSER TO THE SCENE, AND SUGGESTED THAT IF THEY HAD NO OBJECTION I WOULD BE GLAD TO TELEPHONE ASSISTANT SECRETARY ROGERS TO GET HIS OPINION. THEY ENCOURAGED ME TO DO SO.

7. AFTER TELCONS, I REACHED FONMIN LATE DEC 17 AND TOLD HIM WASHINGTON REACTION HAD LIKEWISE BEEN THAT ON BALANCE IT PERHAPS BETTER NOT TO RUSH INTO PRINT WITH A STATEMENT TO WHICH GOC MIGHT NOT HAVE GIVEN FULL CONSIDERATION. LEGISLATIVE PROCESS WAS VERY FAR ALONG. IN LONG RUN IT MIGHT BE MUCH MORE HELPFUL IF STATEMENT CONFIDENTIAL

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WERE ISSUED IN WEEK OR TWO, PERHAPS BEFORE CHRISTMAS. THIS COULD HELP IN FOLLOW-ON TO WHATEVER ACTION CONGRESS HAD TAKEN.

8. I ADDED THAT YOU HAD BEEN HIGHLY PLEASED TO RECEIVE INDICATION OF STEP GOC HAS IN PROSPECT, AND THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE OF GREAT IMPORTANCE IN HELPING US TO BE RESPONSIVE TO CHILE'S NEEDS. I SAID THAT OBVIOUSLY

THE BORADER THE SCOPE OF THE COMMITMENT PRESIDENT
PINOCHET DECIDED TO MAKE, THE BETTER FROM OUR
POINT OF VIEW.

9. CARVAJAL EXPRESSED GREAT APPRECIATION FOR THE
CLARITY AND SPEED OF YOUR RESPONSE.
POPPER

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